

**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, FINANCE AND**  
**ACCOUNTABILITY**  
*TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, CHAIRMAN*



*Oversight Hearing:*  
**“Securing Our Ports: Information Sharing Is Key to Effective  
Maritime Security”**

*Monday July 10, 2006, 1:00 p.m.  
Borough Hall, Brooklyn, New York*

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***OPENING STATEMENT***

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Securing the nation’s ports against a potential terrorist attack has become one of the nation’s security priorities since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Given the fact that ports are large, sprawling enterprises that often stretch across jurisdictional boundaries, the need to share information among federal, state, and local governments, as well as private entities, is central to effective prevention and response.

Today, the maritime system in the United States consists of more than 300 sea and river ports with more than 3,700 cargo and passenger terminals and more than 1,000 harbor channels spread across thousands of miles of coastline.

The Port of New York and New Jersey - the nation’s third largest port - is critical to the economic vitality of the New York metropolitan region, as well as the entire East Coast. The Port of NY and NJ brings together diverse, complex, economically intertwined, and competing interests, serving not only the states of New York and New Jersey but also Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and even my home state of Pennsylvania. Coordination between and amongst all of these entities is vital for national security.

The U.S. Coast Guard has been designated as the lead federal agency with responsibility for port security. The Coast Guard, along with state and local entities such as the NYPD and the Port Authority of NY and NJ, has made significant progress in providing an effective framework for port security here in this region. There is more that needs to be done.

We are pleased to have with us today **Mr. Ray Kelly**, Police Commissioner of the City of New York, **Captain Robert O’Brien**, Captain of the Port of New York and New Jersey, **Ms. Bethann Rooney**, Security Manager of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and **Mr. Stephen Caldwell** from the U.S. Government Accountability Office. Thank you for being here, and we look forward to your testimonies.